

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9957

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL IZMIR

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 5461

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, TU

SUBJ: MERGERS ON THE RIGHT?

1. DEPPRIMIN FEYZIOGLU (LEADER OF THE REPUBLICAN RELIANCE PARTY -- RR), IN A SPEECH IN KAYSERI JULY 11, CALLED ON "ALL ATATURKIST AND NATIONALIST PARTIES AND INDEPENDENTS" TO MERGE UNDER "ONE ROOF" TO FIGHT AGAINST THE REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP), WHICH, HE SAID, HAD "COME UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE EXTREME LEFT AND OF SUBVERSIVE ORGANIZATIONS."

2. FEYZIOGLUS STATEMENT, WHICH APPEARS TO EXCLUDE THE NATIONAL SALVATION PARTY (NSP) AS A CONSTITUENT OF THIS MERGER, IS SIMILAR TO OTHERS THAT HAVE BEEN MADE BY SPOKESMEN FOR THE JUSTIC PARTY (JP) AND NATIONALIST ACTION PARTY (NAP) AND BY SEVERAL INDEPENDENTS IN RECENT WEEKS, BOTH PUBLICLY AND IN PRIVATE TO EMBOFFS. THE IMPETUS APPEARS TO BE COMING FROM (A) AN INCREASING REALIZATION THE DEPPRIMIN ERBAKAN AND HIS NATIONAL SALVATION PARTY ARE THE BAD APPLES IN THE NATIONALIST FRONT BARREL, AND (B) THE DIMINISHING PROSPECT FOR PASSING AN ELECTION ALLIANCE BILL (THE RPP, THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY (DP)

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AND PROBABLY THE NSP WOULD NOT SUPPORT IT).

3. THE NSP IS WIDELY SAID TO BE GAINING POPULARITY RAPIDLY IN CENTRAL, EASTERN AND SOUTHEASTERN TURKEY. TO COMBAT THIS CHALLENGE, THE JP WOULD LIKE TO AVOID HAVING ITS SUPPORT FRAGMENTED BY THE RR, NAP AND DP. THE RR FACES EXTINCTION AND ITS DEPUTIES WOULD PREFER THE BETTER OPPORTUNITY FOR REELECTION OFFERED BY A SPOT ON THE JP TICKET. THE DP AND INDEPENDENTS SUPPORT A MERGER OF "NATIONALISTS" BUT THEY STILL FACE THE DIFFICULTY OF OVERCOMING OLD ANTAGONISMS AGAINST DEMIREL. (THE INDEPENDENTS HAVE TAKEN THE FIRST MAJOR STEP TOWARD EVENTUAL RECONCILIATION BY THEIR SUPPORT OF THE DEMIREL GOVERNMENT.) THE NAP MAY PREFER TO REMAIN ALOOF FROM A MERGER UNTIL THEIR PROSELYTIZING AMONG THE YOUTH HAS GAINED MORE CONVERTS AND THEY COULD EXERT GREATER AUTHORITY IN A NEW MERGED PARTY THAN THEY WOULD AT THE PRESENT TIME; IN THE INTERIM THEY FAVOR AN ELECTION ALLIANCE WHICH WOULD GUARANTEE THEM MORE SEATS THAN THEY ARE LIKELY TO WIN ON THEIR OWN. HOWEVER, IN APPARENT ANTICIPATION OF A MERGER, TURKES HAS RECENTLY ACCUSED THE RPP OF "PLOTTING" THE 1960 REVOLUTION WHICH OVERTHREW MENDERES. SINCE TURKES WAS ONE OF THE LEADERS OF THE REVOLUTION, THIS PLOY MAY GAIN HIM LITTLE, BUT IT DOES INDICATE HE WANTS TO INCREASE HIS ACCEPTABILITY AMONG MENDERES SUPPORTERS IN THE JP, DP AND INDEPENDENTS.

4. ALTHOUGH MANY ARE TALKING OF MERGER, A CLEAR PLAN HAS NOT EMERGED. IT SEEMS TO US UNLIKELY THAT EVERYONE ON THE RIGHT (EXCLUSIVE OF THE NSP) WILL MERGE INTO A SINGLE PARTY; HOWEVER, IT DOES APPEAR PROBABLE THAT THERE WILL BE FURTHER RESHUFFLING WITHIN AND AMONG THE PARTIES.

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